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PART-IV

HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT CHANDIGARH

CORRECTION SLIP

The 10th April, 2026

No. 45 Rules/II.D4.- The existing title 'Rules for Video Conferencing for Courts', as contained in Chapter-1, Part-BB of the Punjab and Haryana High Court Rules and Orders, Volume-III, is substituted with the title **'The Use of Electronic Communication and Audio-Video Electronic Means Rules, 2026'.**

BY ORDER OF HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE AND JUDGES

Sd/-
SMRITI DHIR
Registrar (Rules)
for Registrar General.

3689/4-2026/Pb. Govt. Press, S.A.S. Nagar.

PART-IV

HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT CHANDIGARH

CORRECTION SLIP

The 10th April, 2026

No. 92 Rules/II.D4.- The existing title 'Rules for Video Conferencing for Courts', as contained in Chapter-1, Part-I of the Punjab and Haryana High Court Rules and Orders, Volume-I, is substituted with the title **'The Use of Electronic Communication and Audio-Video Electronic Means Rules, 2026'.**

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PART-IV

HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT CHANDIGARH

CORRECTION SLIP

The 10th April, 2026

No. 202 Rules/II.D4.- The existing Video Conferencing Rules contained in Chapter-1, Part-H of the Punjab and Haryana High Court Rules and Orders, Volume-V are substituted with the following:

"Pursuant to the 'Model Rules on Video Conferencing (Nyaya Shruti)' forwarded by the Government of India, the High Court of Punjab and Haryana, hereby, makes the following Rules:-

OBJECT AND REASONS

Whereas, in order to avoid delay in judicial proceedings due to non-availability of parties, advocates, witnesses and accused physically, it is expedient to formalise and enable use of electronic communication and other audio-video electronic means for the purpose of conducting trial, inquiry and proceeding under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (No.46 of 2023).

Whereas, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (BNSS) under Section 54, 63, 64, 70, 71, 94, 154, 183, 187, 193, 209, 227, 230, 231, 251, 254, 262, 265, 266, 308, 310, 316, 336, 355, 356, 392 and 530 recognizes use of audio-video electronic means and other forms of electronic communication for different proceedings.

Whereas, Section 530 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (BNSS) provides that all trials, inquiries and proceedings under this Sanhita, including examination of complainant and witnesses, recording of evidence in inquiries and trials and all appellate proceedings or any other proceeding, may be held in electronic mode, by use of electronic communication or use of audio-video electronic means.

Whereas, there is no restriction on civil courts in using video conferencing facilities in conducting trial.

Whereas, the High Court of Punjab and Haryana and the District Judiciary in the concerned States of Punjab, Haryana and U.T. Chandigarh, have been using video conferencing facilities under the 'Rules for Video Conferencing for Courts' for conducting inquiries and trials in civil as well as criminal proceedings.

In exercise of the powers conferred by Articles 225 & 227 of the Constitution of lndia and all other enabling sections of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (No. 46 of 2023), the High Court of Punjab and Haryana makes the 'The Use of Electronic Communication and Audio-Video Electronic Means Rules' as under: -

CHAPTER -I
PRELIMINARY

1. **Short title, Application and Commencement**
   a) These Rules shall be called "The Use of Electronic Communication and Audio-Video Electronic Means Rules, 2026."
   b) They shall apply to all judicial, departmental and mediation proceedings in pending cases in the High Court of Punjab and Haryana High Court as well as Courts and Tribunals over which the High Court has jurisdiction.
   c) They shall come into force from the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.
2. **Definitions**
   (i) In these Rules, unless the context otherwise requires, -
   a) **"Advocate"** means and includes an advocate entered in any roll maintained under the provisions of the Advocates Act, 1961 and shall for the purpose of these rules, include prosecuting officers and government pleaders;
   b) **"Advocate's remote point"** means a place from where an advocate or advocates may appear through a live link and shall include advocate's chamber or office for video conferencing. It shall not include any public place, open area including corridors, vehicles, waiting area or parking space where decorum of proceedings cannot be ensured;
   c) **"Commissioner"** means a person appointed as commissioner under the provisions of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (46 of 2023) or any other law for the time being in force;
   d) **"Coordinator"** means a person nominated as coordinator under Rule 8;
   e) **"Court"** includes a physical court and a virtual court or a tribunal.
   f) **"Court point"** means the courtroom or the place where the court is physically convened, or the place where a commissioner or an inquiry officer holds proceedings pursuant to the directions of the court;
   g) **"Court room"** means the place or room or enclosed space in which court proceedings are held;
   h) **"Designated Place"** means any one or more places notified by the State Governments of Punjab, Haryana and U.T. Chandigarh, where the facilities are made available for use of electronic communication or use of audio-video electronic means with courts points and shall include Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centre from where evidence of such witnesses may be recorded;
   i) **"Designated Video Conferencing Software"** means a software approved by the High Court for the use of video conferencing or other audio-video electronic communication.
   j) **"High Court"** means the High Court of Punjab and Haryana at Chandigarh.
   k) **"Live link"** means and includes a live link for audio-video electronic communication or other arrangements whereby a witness, an accused,

party, advocate or any other person is required by Court to remain present virtually in the court room by use of electronic communication or use of audio-video electronic means;

l) **"Remote Point"** means a place where any person is required to be present or appear through a live link and includes Designated Place, but does not include Advocate's remote point;

m) **"Remote User"** means a user participating in court proceedings through video conferencing at a remote point;

n) **"Required Person"** includes:

i. a person who is to be examined as a witness, complainant or otherwise; or

ii. any person including an accused in whose presence certain proceedings are to be recorded or conducted; or

iii. an advocate or a party in person; or

iv. any person including a victim who is required to make submissions before the Court; or

v. any other person who is permitted by the Court to appear through video-conferencing or other modes of audio-visual electronic communication device;

o) **"Rules"** shall mean these rules and any reference to a rule or sub-rule shall be a reference to a rule or sub-rule of these rules;

(ii) The words and phrases used but not defined herein shall bear the same meaning as assigned to them in the Punjab and Haryana High Court Rules and Orders; Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (BNSS); Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023 (BSA);The Code of Civil Procedure, 1908; Information Technology Act, 2000(IT Act) and the General Clauses Act, 1897.

3. Construction of references

Unless the context otherwise requires, any reference to Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 in these Rules shall include reference to the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973,and any reference to Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023, in these rules shall include reference to Indian Evidence Act, 1872 under the corresponding provisions.

CHAPTER-II
GENERAL PRINCIPLES

4. General Principles Governing Video Conferencing and other modes of Audio-video electronic communication

Subject to the provisions hereinafter contained, video conferencing and other modes of audio-visual electronic communication may be used at all stages of judicial proceedings and proceedings conducted by the Court, where a person required to be present or appear is not physically present in court room:

(1) All proceedings conducted by a Court via video conferencing and other modes of audio-visual electronic communication shall be judicial proceedings and all practices, decorum and protocols shall apply to these proceedings;

(2) All relevant statutory provisions applicable to judicial proceedings including provisions of BNSS, CPC, Contempt of Courts Act, 1971, BSA and IT Act, shall apply to proceedings conducted by video conferencing;

(3) Subject to maintaining independence, impartiality and credibility of judicial proceedings, and subject to such directions as the High Court may issue, Courts may adopt such technological advances which may become available from time to time;

(4) Courts shall use only High Court/Government approved and secure video conferencing platforms equipped with end-to-end encryption to protect data and privacy;

(5) Any unauthorized access, hacking attempts, or security breaches must be reported immediately and addressed in accordance with the law;

(6) The Rules as applicable to a Court shall *mutatis mutandis* apply to a Commissioner appointed by the Court to record evidence and to an inquiry officer conducting an inquiry;

(7) Unless expressly permitted by the Court, no person, either at Court Point or at Designated Place or at Remote Point or Advocate's Remote Point, shall record or publish the proceedings or any part thereof, conducted through video conferencing or other modes of audio-visual electronic communication;

5. Identification of person appearing through video conferencing or other modes of audio-visual electronic communication

The person defined in rule 2(i) (n) shall provide an identity proof, as recognized by the Government of India or State Government or Union Territory, to the court point coordinator by electronic communication. In case, identity proof is not readily available, the Court may, upon satisfaction, allow such person to participate in proceedings without production of identity proof. The same must be reflected in the order sheet of the Court.

6. Facilities recommended for Video Conferencing

The following equipments and facilities are recommended for conducting proceedings by video conferencing at the Court Point and the Remote Point:

Computer	**Desktop and Laptop**
Network and High-Speed internet	Connection (Minimum 50 Mbps)- Internet to ensure seamless video transmission without lag; Connectivity Backup Internet Connection - A secondary connection to prevent disruptions; Dedicated LAN/Wi-Fi Setup- To ensure stable and secure connectivity;

Video Equipment	High-Resolution Cameras (Full HD/4K)- To capture clear video feeds of participants; Adjustable and Multiple Camera Angles- To enable focusing on the judge, lawyers, accused, or witnesses;
Audio Equipment	Noise-Canceling Microphones- To reduce background noise and ensures clear audio transmission; High-Quality Speakers- To provide clear sound output for participants; Echo-Cancellation and Acoustic Treatment – To enhance audio clarity by minimizing reverberation;
Display and Projection equipments	Large Display Screens (LED/Projectors) - For clear visibility of remote participants; Multiple Screen Setup (Optional)- To allow simultaneous viewing of different participants;
Software and Encryption Standards	End-to-End Encrypted Video Conferencing Software - To ensure secure communication; Firewall and VPN Protection –To prevent unauthorized access; Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) for Users –To ensure identity verification; Secure- Login Credentials for Each Session –To limit access to authorized personnel
Recording and Documentation	Court-Approved Recording Mechanism –For secure documentation of hearings; Transcription Services- Automated/manual transcription of court proceedings; Cloud or Local Storage Options –To secure storage for recorded sessions;
IT Support and Maintenance	On-Site Technical Team - For quick resolution of technical issues; 24/7 Remote IT Support- To provide assistance for troubleshooting; Regular Equipment Maintenance- To ensure uninterrupted functionality
Power Backup	Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) System – To prevent power outages from disrupting proceedings; Backup Generators for prolonged power failures, etc.

7. The designated video conferencing software to be procured by the High Court shall facilitate following minimum requirements:

(1) an online, real-time collaboration software with features like video, voice, screen sharing, document sharing, presentation, recording etc.

(2) the software shall have a whiteboard for flashing messages and recording meetings or sessions.

(3) the complete access log of the different users with extended reports, including IP/Device details/Application details, should be provided with each meeting room.

(4) the platform shall be hosted on an India-based data centre with a 100% Disaster recovery site.

(5) the software shall offer cross-platform functionality, ensuring seamless operation across various operating systems, including Windows, Linux, macOS, IOS etc., to accommodate diverse technology ecosystems of all participants and guarantee a consistent user experience regardless of the operating system used.

(6) the platform shall be scalable to multi point connectivity with 500 user logins at a time.

(7) the platform shall provide private and confidential breakout rooms between multiple users.

(8) the platform shall be capable of synchronizing and scheduling with cause list of cases by advocates with waiting lobby and automatic pulling according to the cause list.

(9) the platform shall provide master control facility at Court's end, recording and archiving facility at Court Point, server or cloud.

(10) the platform must provide audit trail facility of the proceedings and also provision of a firewall.

8. Appointment of Coordinators

(1) There shall be a Coordinator both at the Court Point and at the designated place from where any required person is to be examined or heard or is directed to remain present. However, the coordinator may be required at the remote point only when a witness or a person accused of an offence is to be examined.

(2) In all the Courts, one or more persons nominated by the High Court or the Principal District and Sessions Judge/District and Sessions Judge concerned within whose jurisdiction the respective Court is situated, shall perform the functions of the coordinator(s) at the Court Point/Designated Place.

(3) The Court may appoint any court official as a coordinator at the Court Point.

(4) The coordinator at the designated place may be any of the following:

Sub Rule	**Where the Advocate or Required Person is at the following point**:-	**The remote point Coordinator Shall be**:-
8.4.1	Overseas	An official of the relevant Indian Consulate/Indian Embassy /High Commission;
8.4.2	Court of another State or Union Territory of India	Any authorized official nominated by the concerned Principal District & Sessions Judge/District and Sessions Judge;

8.4.3	Mediation Centre or office of District Legal Services Authority (including Taluka Legal Services Committee)	Any authorized person/official nominated by the Chairperson or Secretary of the concerned District Legal Services Authority;
8.4.4	Jail or prison	The concerned Jail Superintendent or Officer-in-charge of the prison; or an official authorized by him;
8.4.5	Hospitals administered by the Central Government, the State Government or local bodies	Medical Superintendent or an official authorized by them or the person in charge of the said hospital;
8.4.6	Observation Home, Special Home, Children's Home, Shelter Home, or any institution referred to as a Child Care Institution and where the Required Person is a child in conflict with law or a child or person who is an inmate of such Child Care Institution.	The Superintendent or Officer-in-charge of that Institution or an official authorized by them;
8.4.7	Women's Rescue Homes, Protection Homes, Shelter Homes, Nari Niketans or any institution referred to as a women's facility (collectively referred to as women's facilities).	The Superintendent or Officer-in-charge of the women's facility or an official authorized by them;
8.4.8	In custody, care or employment of any other government office, organization or institution (collectively referred to as institutional facilities).	The Superintendent or Officer-in-charge of the institutional facility or an official authorized by them;
8.4.9	Forensic Science Lab	The Administrative Officer-in-charge or any other person nominated by the Director/Head of the Laboratory;

8.4.10	In case of any other location	The concerned Court may nominate any public servant or public official of the concerned department to render services as a Coordinator to ensure that the proceedings are conducted in a fair, impartial and independent manner and according to the directions issued by the Court in that behalf.

(5) When a Required Person is at any of the Remote Points mentioned in Sub Rule 8(4) and video conferencing facilities are not available at any of these places the concerned Court may formally request the Principal District and Sessions Judge/District and Sessions Judge, in whose jurisdiction the Remote Point is situated, to appoint a Coordinator for and to provide a video conferencing facility from proximate and suitable Court premises.

(6) The Coordinators at both the Court Point and Remote Point shall ensure that the recommended requirements set out in Rule 6 and 7are complied with, so that the proceedings are conducted seamlessly.

(7) Notwithstanding the provisions of Clause 8.4.1, where witness examination is to take place in a criminal case of a person located outside the country, the provisions of the BNSS 2023 (Section 110 & Chapter 8) and "Comprehensive Guidelines for investigation abroad and issue of Letters Rogatory (LRs) /Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) Request and Service of Summons/Notices/Judicial documents in respect of Criminal Matters prevailing at that time" will be followed to the extent they are in conformity with the provisions of the BNSS and BSA.

9. Preparatory arrangements

(1) The coordinator at the designated place/remote point shall ensure that;

(a) the required persons scheduled to appear in a particular proceeding are ready at the remote point/designated place for video conferencing well before the scheduled time;

(b) no unauthorized recording device is used;

(c) no unauthorized person enters the remote point or designated place when the videoconference is in progress;

(d) the person being examined is not prompted, tutored, coaxed, induced or coerced in any manner by any person and that the person being examined does not refer to any document, script or device without the permission of the Court concerned during the course of examination.

(2) Where the witness to be examined through video conferencing or other audio-visual electronic communication requires or if it is otherwise expedient to do so, the Court shall give sufficient notice in advance, setting out the schedule of video conferencing and in appropriate cases may provide

the copies of all or any part of the relevant documents in electronic form to the coordinator of the concerned remote point.

(3) Before the scheduled video conferencing, the Court shall ensure that the coordinator at the designated place or remote point receives in electronic form, copies of all or any part of the documents which may be required for recording of evidence, or for reference of the witness. However, coordinator shall allow such documents in electronic form to be used by the required person only with the permission of the Court.

(4) Whenever required, the Court shall order the coordinator at the Remote Point or at the Court Point to provide-

(a) a translator in case the person to be examined is not conversant with the official language of the court;

(b) an expert in sign languages in case the person to be examined is impaired in speech and/or hearing;

(c) an interpreter or a special educator, as the case may be, in case a person to be examined is differently abled, either temporarily or permanently;

(d) a person for reading of documents in case the person to be examined is visually challenged.

CHAPTER-III
PROCEDURE FOR VIDEO CONFERENCING

10. Appearance through video conferencing and other modes of audio-visual electronic communication

(1) In criminal cases, any party to the proceedings or witness, save and except where proceedings are initiated at the instance of the Court or on request of public prosecutor, may move a request in the form provided in **Schedule-II** for presence and proceedings through video conferencing or other modes of audio-visual electronic communication.

Provided that the Court, as far as possible, may examine public servant or expert through audio-video electronic means:

Provided further that the prosecution while submitting trial programme shall indicate the witnesses who are to be examined through audio-video electronic means and the details of designated place or remote point for examination of such witnesses:

Provided also that the defence while submitting the list of defence witnesses shall indicate the witnesses who are to be examined through audio-video electronic means and the details of designated place or remote point for examination of such witnesses:

Provided further that the decision of the Court with regard to presence of party or examination of the witness through audio-video electronic means at the designated place or remote point shall be final and binding.

(2) In civil cases, the court may, at its discretion, or on the request of any of the parties in the form provided in **Schedule-II** initiate process for hearing of any case through video conferencing and other modes of audio-visual electronic communication.

Provided that the parties while submitting the list of witnesses shall indicate the witnesses who are to be examined through audio-video electronic means and the details of designated place or remote point for examination of such witnesses:

Provided further that the decision of the Court with regard to presence of party or examination of the witness through audio-video electronic means and the designated place or remote point shall be final and binding.

(3) While allowing a request for video conferencing the Court may also fix the schedule for hearing through the video conferencing or other modes of audio-visual electronic communication.

(4) An advocate may appear from advocate's remote point for making submissions or for examination of witnesses present before the Court.

(5) Where video conferencing proceedings are conducted for making oral submissions, the order may require the advocate or party in person to submit written arguments and precedents, if any, in advance on the official email ID of the concerned Court.

11. Service of processes

(1) Process issued to a witness who is to be examined through video conferencing, shall mention the date, time and venue of the concerned designated place and shall direct the witness to attend in person along with proof of identity.

(2) If a person is examined with reference to a particular document then the process to witness shall be accompanied by a copy of such document.

(3) The existing rules regarding service of summons and the consequences for non-attendance, as provided in CPC and BNSS shall apply with respect to service of summons for proceedings conducted by video conferencing.

12. Examination of persons and witnesses through video conferencing and other modes of audio-visual electronic communication

(1) The person being examined through video conferencing and other modes of audio-visual electronic communication shall ordinarily be examined during the working hours of the court concerned or at such time as the court may deem fit. The oath will be administered to the person being examined by the Coordinator at the Court Point.

(2) Where the person being examined is an accused in custody, the court shall provide him adequate opportunity to consult in privacy with his advocate before, during and after the hearing through the video conferencing or other modes of audio-visual electronic communication.

(3) Subject to the provisions for examination of witnesses contained in the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, before the examination of the witness, the documents, if any, sought to be relied upon shall be transmitted by the required person to the witness, so that the witness acquires familiarity with

the said documents. The required person will file an acknowledgement with the Court in this behalf.

(4) If a person is examined with reference to a particular document then the summons to witness must be accompanied by a copy of the document. The original document should be exhibited at the Court Point in accordance with the deposition of the concerned person being examined.

(5) The Court would be at liberty to record the demeanour of the person being examined.

(6) The Court will note the objections raised during the deposition of the person being examined and rule on them.

(7) The Court shall read over and explain the evidence recorded to the witness and obtain the signature of the person being examined on the transcript immediately after the examination is concluded. The signed transcript shall form part of the record of the judicial proceedings. The signature on the transcript of the person being examined shall be obtained in either of the following ways:-

(a) If digital signatures are available at both the concerned Court Point and Remote Point, the copy of the transcript digitally signed by the presiding officer at the Court Point shall be sent by the designated video conferencing software on official e-mail of the coordinator at remote point where a printout of the same shall be taken and signed by the person being examined. A scanned copy of the transcript digitally signed by the coordinator at the remote point shall be transmitted by the designated video conferencing software to the official e-mail of the Court Point, where a printout of the same shall be taken and made part of the judicial record.

(b) If digital signatures are not available, the printout of the transcript shall be signed by the presiding Judge at the Court Point and shall be sent in non-editable scanned format by the designated video conferencing software on official e-mail of the coordinator at remote point where a printout of the same shall be taken and signed by the person examined and countersigned by the coordinator at the remote point. A non-editable scanned format of the transcript so signed shall be sent by the coordinator at the remote point by the designated video conferencing software or official e-mail to the Court Point where a printout of the same shall be taken and made part of the judicial record.

The hard copy of the evidence signed by the witness and the coordinator at the Remote Point shall also be dispatched to the Court Point in both the above cases.

(8) The court may, at the request of a person to be examined, or on its own motion, taking into account the best interest of the person to be examined, direct appropriate measures to protect the privacy of the person examined bearing in mind aspects such as age, gender, physical condition and recognized customs and practices.

(9) The coordinator at the designated place shall ensure that no person is present at the remote point, save and except the person being examined and those whose presence is deemed administratively necessary by the coordinator for the proceedings.

(10) The court may also impose such other conditions as are necessary for effective hearing of cases through video conferencing and other modes of audio-video electronic communication.

(11) The examination shall, as far as practicable, proceed without interruption or the grant of unnecessary adjournments. However, the Court or the Commissioner as the case may be, will be at liberty to determine whether an adjournment should be granted, and if so, on what terms.

(12) Evidence of a witness shall be recorded only from the designated place.

Provided that if the Court thinks fit, the required person may be permitted for recording of his evidence or to connect for hearing of cases through video conferencing or other modes of audio-visual electronic communication from the place of his residence and work in the situation(s) hereinafter provided:

(a) Where a required person is not capable of reaching the Court Point or the designated place due to sickness or physical infirmity, or whose presence at the remote point cannot be secured without undue delay or expense, the Court may authorize conduct of video conferencing from the place of his residence or work.

(b) Where one of the parties to a petition under Section 13-B of Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 is residing outside India, Court may dispense with the requirement of presence of such party before Indian Consulate/Indian Embassy/High Commission and may permit the recording of statement from any other remote point including the residence of the party subject to satisfaction of Court regarding identity of party and voluntariness of the statement and consent of other party.

(13) Where the court is of opinion, for the reasons recorded in writing that, evidence of the witness cannot be effectively recorded, it may decline to examine such witness through video conferencing.

13. Exhibiting or showing documents to witness or accused at a remote point

If during the course of examination of a person at a remote point by video conferencing, it is necessary to show a document to the person, the Court may permit the document to be shown in the following manner:

(a) if the document is at Court Point, by transmitting the document through document visualizer;

(b) if the document is at Court Point, but document visualizer is not available, by transmitting a copy or image of the document to the remote point electronically through the designated video conferencing software or official e-mail;

(c) if the document is at the remote point, by transmitting a copy or image of the document to the Court Point electronically through the designated

video conferencing software or official e-mail. The hard copy of the document countersigned by the witness and the coordinator at the designated place shall also be dispatched to the Court Point.

14. Ensuring seamless video conferencing

(1) The coordinator at Court Point shall provide the live link of the hearing through video conferencing or other modes of audio-visual electronic communication.

(2) If the proceedings are carried out from any place other than a designated place, the coordinator, if any, at such remote point shall ensure compliance of all technical requirements.

(3) The coordinator at the Court Point shall be in contact with the required person(s) and guide them with regard to the fulfillment of technical and other requirements for executing a successful hearing through video conferencing. Any problem faced by such required person shall be resolved by the coordinator at Court Point.

(4) The coordinator at the Court Point shall ensure that any document or audio-visual files, emailed by the required person, are duly received at the Court Point and placed on file.

(5) The Court shall also record its satisfaction as to clarity, sound and connectivity for both Court Users and Remote Users.

15.Remand

The court may, as per the provisions of Section 187 BNSS, authorize detention in judicial custody of any person accused of an offence, by video conferencing or other modes of audio-visual electronic communication:

Provided that if the accused is already in judicial custody, whether of the same Court or some other Court or is undergoing sentence, the Court may further remand him during inquiry or trial under Section 346(2) of BNSS through video conferencing or other modes of audio-visual electronic communication.

16. Plea bargaining

The Court may also use the modes of audio-visual electronic communication for the purpose of plea bargaining under Chapter XXIII of BNSS.

17. Record of proceedings through audio-visual electronic communication

Wherever any proceeding is carried out by the Court under these rules by taking recourse to the modes of audio-visual electronic communication, the Court shall mention in the order sheet that the hearing has been conducted through video conferencing.

CHAPTER-IV
GENERAL PROCEDURE

18. Conduct of Proceedings

(1) The procedure set out hereinafter in this chapter is without prejudice to the procedure indicated elsewhere in these rules where proceedings are conducted through video conferencing or other modes of audio-visual electronic communication.

(2) The coordinator at the Court Point shall ensure that video conferencing is conducted only through a designated video conferencing software:

Provided that in the event of a technical fault or for any other sufficient cause, the Court may for reasons to be recorded in writing, permit the use of a software other than the designated video conferencing software for video conferencing in that particular proceeding:

Provided further that nothing contained in these rules shall prevent a Court, after recording its reasons in writing, from using any software other than the designated video conferencing software or other modes of audio visual electronic communication, to facilitate the hearing of cases in electronic mode.

(3) In case the person to be examined is an accused, the prosecution will confirm the location of the accused at the Remote Point.

(4) If the accused is in custody and not present at the Court Point, the Court shall order a multi-point video conference between Court Point, the witness and the accused in custody to facilitate recording of the statement of the witness including medical or other experts.

19. Third parties to the case

(1) Third parties may be allowed to remain present during video conferencing only upon a specific order of the Court. However, they shall be passive participants and shall not be allowed to make any submission without permission of the Court.

(2) Where, for any reason, a person unconnected with the case is present at the remote point, that person shall be identified by the coordinator at the remote point at the beginning of the proceedings and the purpose of the presence of that person shall be conveyed to the Court. Such person shall continue to remain present only with the permission of the Court.

20. Costs of Video Conferencing

In the absence of rules prescribed by the concerned Court, the Court may take into consideration the following circumstances while determining and/or apportioning the costs of video conferencing:

(1) In criminal cases, the expenses of the video conferencing facility including expenses involved in preparing soft copies/certified copies of the Court record and transmitting the same to the Coordinator at the Remote Point, and the fee payable to the translator/interpreter/special educator, as the case

may be, as also the fee payable to the Coordinator at the Remote Point, shall be borne by such party as directed by the Court.

(2) In civil cases, generally, the party making the request for recording evidence through video conferencing shall bear the expenses.

(3) Besides the above, the Court may also make an order as to expenses as it considers appropriate, taking into account the rules/instructions regarding payment of expenses to the complainant and witnesses, as may be prevalent from time to time.

(4) It shall be open to the Court to waive the costs as warranted in a given situation.

21. Conduct of Proceedings

(1) The required persons shall have their presence recorded. However, in case they are desirous that their face or name be masked, information to that effect shall be furnished to the Court Point coordinator prior to the commencement of proceedings for the approval of the court.

(2) The required persons shall abide by the requirements set out in **Schedule I.**

(3) The Court Point coordinator shall send the live link on mobile number furnished by the required persons permitted to be virtually present in the Court. Once the proceedings have commenced, no other person shall be permitted to participate in the virtual hearing except with the permission of Court.

(4) The required persons, after joining the hearing shall remain in the virtual lobby if available, until they are admitted to virtual hearing by the Coordinator at the Court Point.

(5) Participation in the proceedings through video conferencing shall constitute consent by the required persons to the proceedings being recorded.

(6) Establishment and disconnection of links between the Court Point and the Remote Point shall be regulated by orders of the Court.

(7) The court shall satisfy itself that the required person can be seen and heard clearly and can clearly see and hear the court.

(8) To ensure that video conferencing is conducted seamlessly, the difficulties, if any, experienced in connectivity must be brought to the notice of the Court at the earliest on the mobile number of the Court Point coordinator which has been furnished to the required person before the commencement of the video conferencing. No complaint shall be entertained subsequently.

22. Access to Legal Aid Clinics/Camps/Lok Adalat/Jail Adalats

(1) In conformity with the provisions of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987and the laws in force, in proceedings related to Legal Aid Clinics, Camps, Lok Adalats or Jail Adalats, any person who at the Remote Point is in Jail or Prison shall be examined by the Chairman/Secretary of the District Legal Service Authority or Members of Lok Adalats before passing any award or orders as per law.

(2) Such award or order shall have the same force as if it was passed by the regular Lok Adalat or Jail Adalat.

(3) Copy of the award or order and the record of proceedings shall be sent to the Remote Point.

CHAPTER-V
MISCELLANEOUS

23. Power to Relax

The High Court may, if satisfied that the operation of any Rule is causing undue hardship, by order dispense with or relax the requirements of that Rule to such extent and subject to such conditions, as may be stipulated to deal with the case in a just and equitable manner.

24. Residual Provisions

(i) Matters concerning which no express provision has been made in these Rules shall be decided by the Court consistent with the principle of furthering the interests of justice.

(ii) If audio-video electronic communication is sufficient for seamless video-conferencing, the non-availability of any recommended equipments or infrastructure shall not, by itself, render the proceedings invalid.

25. Repeal and Savings

(i) 'Rules for Video Conferencing for Courts' contained in Chapter 1, Part-H of Punjab and Haryana High Court Rules and Orders, Volume-V, are hereby repealed.

(ii) Notwithstanding the repeal, provisions of 'Rules for Video Conferencing for Courts' Rules shall apply to: -

(a) Actions and proceedings commenced before these rules came into force.

(b) All notifications/orders published/issued under the 'Rules for Video Conferencing for Courts' contained in Chapter-1, Part-H of Punjab and Haryana High Court Rules and Orders, Volume-V, to the extent they are not repugnant to these rules, shall be deemed to have been made or issued under these rules.

SCHEDULE I

1. All required persons shall wear sober attire consistent with the dignity of the proceedings. Advocates shall be appropriately dressed in professional attire prescribed under the Advocates Act, 1961. Police officials shall appear in the uniform prescribed for police officials under the relevant statute or orders. The attire for judicial officers and court staff will be as specified in the relevant rules prescribed in that behalf by the High Court. The decision of the Presiding Judge or officer as to the dress code will be final.
2. Proceedings shall be conducted at the appointed date and time. Punctuality shall be scrupulously observed.
3. The case will be called out and appearances shall be recorded on the direction of the Court.
4. Every required person shall adhere to the courtesies and protocol that are followed in a physical Court. Judges will be addressed as "Madam/Sir" or "Your Honour". Officers will be addressed by their designation such as "Bench Officer/Court Master". Advocates will be addressed as "Learned Counsel/Senior Counsel".
5. Required Persons shall keep their microphones muted till they are called upon to make submissions.
6. Remote Users shall ensure that their devices are free from malware.
7. Advocates appearing through video conferencing before a Court/Tribunal shall join from the Advocate's remote point. Advocates shall not be permitted to join from mobile phones or any public place, open area including corridors, vehicles, waiting area or parking space.
8. Remote Users and the Coordinator at the Remote Point shall ensure that the Remote Point is situated in a quiet location, is properly secured and has sufficient internet coverage. Any unwarranted disturbance caused during video conferencing may, if the Presiding Judge, so directs render the proceedings *non-est*.
9. The cell phones of all required persons shall remain switched off or in airplane mode during the proceedings.
10. Required persons should endeavor to look into the camera, remain attentive and not engage in any other activity during the proceedings.
11. Background noise, unnecessary movements, and interruptions must be minimized to maintain the decorum of judicial proceedings.
12. The use of offensive language, disrespectful behavior, or non-compliance with judicial instructions may lead to immediate removal from the session and potential legal consequences.
13. Court now have the discretion to mute or remove any required person violating these conduct rules.

SCHEDULE II

Request Form for Video Conference

1. Case Number /CNR Number (if any)
2. Cause Title
3. Proposed Date of conference (DD/MM/YYYY):_____
4. Location of the Court Point(s):_____
5. Location of the Remote Point(s):_____
6. Names & Designation of the Participants at the Remote Point:_____
7. Reasons for Video Conferencing:

In the matter of:

8. Nature of Proceedings:

Final Hearing ☐

Motion Hearing ☐

Others ☐

I have read and understood the provisions of 'The Use of Electronic Communication and Audio-Video Electronic Means Rules, 2026' (hyperlink). I undertake to remain bound by the same to the extent applicable to me. I agree to pay video conferencing charges if so directed by the Court. Signature of the applicant/authorized signatory: Date:
For use of the Registry/Court Point Coordinator
A) **Bench assigned:** B) **Hearing:** Held on (DD/MM/YYYY): Commencement Time: End time: Number of hours: C) **Costs**: Overseas transmission charges if any: To be Incurred by Applicant/Respondent: To be shared equally: Waived; as ordered by the Court: Signature of the authorized officer: Date:

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BY ORDER OF HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE AND JUDGES

Sd/-
SMRITI DHIR,
Registrar (Rules)
for Registrar General.

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